

The Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia met in Official Session on March 6, 2002, at 3:30 p.m. in the public meeting room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Greg Dunn, Chairman
Linda Wells, Vice Chair
Herb Frady
Peter Pfeifer
A.G. VanLandingham

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris W. Cofty, County Administrator
Carol Chandler, Executive Assistant
Dennis Davenport, Assistant County Attorney
Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk

Chairman Dunn called the meeting to order, offered the Invocation and led the pledge to the Flag.

EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS:

The Board recognized the following employees for their years of service to Fayette County:

Chairman Dunn introduced Lenelle Coker and Deborah Hannah who have fifteen years of service in the Sheriff's Office.

Director of Field Operations at the Sheriff's Office Major Ken Rose remarked that it was nice to work at a place where the environment was to hire, develop and nurture employees as long term tenured employees. He said Sergeant Hannah and Deputy Sheriff Coker represent that today.

Major Rose remarked that Sergeant Hannah began her career at the Sheriff's Department in March of 1987 and worked at the technical services division and also worked in the crime scene unit. He said she also assisted in the development and startup of the I.D. program. He said in 1988 Sergeant Hannah was transferred to the uniform patrol division. He said in 1992 Sheriff Johnson implemented the Drug Abuse and Resistance Education Program in the lower level schools. He said Sheriff Johnson assigned Sergeant Hannah at that time to be the Department's first DARE Officer. He said after Sergeant Hannah's completion of two week DARE Officer training she began teaching the core curriculum for the State of Georgia in the elementary schools and had done so since that time. He said Sergeant Hannah was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 1994 and consistently taught and nurtured the DARE Program as part of the Sheriff's outreach in educating the children of this community against pro choice, positive reinforcement and anti-drug messages sponsored by the DARE Organization. He said Sergeant Hannah had received numerous awards during her tenure with the Department. He said Sergeant Hannah was going on

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her third year with the Georgia DARE Officers Association as State Treasurer. He commented that during the past two or three years Sergeant Hannah had made some huge strides in expanding the DARE Program not only in the number of personnel but also into the middle schools and her personal abilities as instructors or mentors to teach other officers throughout the State of Georgia. He said this included Federal, State and Local Officers that she teaches here in the State of Georgia how to conduct their implementation. He said she also travels out of State to monitor officers from all over the world in conferences in their training and conducts mentoring in other parts of the United States. He said the Sheriff's Department was very pleased with Sergeant Hannah's success in that area.

Major Rose introduced Deputy Sheriff Lenelle Coker. He said Deputy Sheriff Coker had begun working in the Sheriff's Department in the jail with the technical services department in October of 1986. He said since that time Deputy Sheriff Coker had worked in several divisions within the Department serving warrants and conducting transports. He said eventually Deputy Sheriff Coker found herself in the courthouse annex as a Court Services Deputy. He said Deputy Sheriff Coker was married to Lieutenant Steve Coker who worked in the Technical Services Division. He said they have one son named Chandler Wade. He said Deputy Sheriff Coker was a graduate of Bryan College with a Bachelor's Degree in Education. He said after receiving her college degree, she decided to go into law enforcement. He said Deputy Sheriff Coker enjoys her free time celebrating with her church and activities associated with her church. He said she also enjoys family activities as well as outdoor activities. He said her hobbies were centered around her heritage and strong sense of values. He said Deputy Sheriff Coker was considered one of the Sheriff Department's finest employees and an exemplary officer at the Sheriff's Department.

Chairman Dunn introduced Phyllis Harris of Juvenile Court who had fifteen years of service with the county. Judge Tarey Schell remarked that Phyllis Harris was the Clerk of the Juvenile Court in Fayette County which was part of the Spalding Circuit. He remarked that Phyllis' husband was on the County Commission at one time. He said he became acquainted with Phyllis in 1993 when he became involved with the Juvenile Court as an attorney and guardian ad litem. He said Phyllis was a dedicated professional. He said juvenile law was a very sensitive part of the community that deals not only with deprived children but children who were accused of delinquent acts. He said he had never seen anybody who puts more human thought and care into the youngsters who come in than he had with Phyllis. He said it had been a pleasure working with Phyllis. He said the Juvenile Court system in Fayette County was in good hands.

Chairman Dunn introduced Captain Doug Morris from the Fire and Emergency Services Department.

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Chief Jack Krakeel remarked that the Morris family had made a career of the Fire and Emergency Services community. He said Doug had been with the Department for sixteen years. He said during that time Doug had risen to the rank of Station Captain and currently was the Station Captain at Station No. 5 on Highway 85 South. He said Doug was a nationally registered paramedic, a critical care paramedic, fire instructor and holds almost every certification relating to instruction in the field of emergency medical services. He remarked that Captain Morris was a tremendously valuable asset to Fayette County Fire and Emergency Services. He said Doug assists the Department on an annual basis with recertification program and various clinical areas that have specialty certifications. He said Captain Morris holds those credentials and the Department utilizes him to the fullest extent. He said to give everyone some idea of Doug's versatility during the late 1980's the Department was struggling to find a computer program that could be utilized to record incident data in some meaningful manner. He said the Department had found a program but it fell far short of what the Department wanted to achieve in terms of doing statistical analysis. He said he had gone to Doug and asked him about writing a computer program for the Department. He remarked that Doug had spent approximately six months and developed more than forty different computer programs that actually formed the basis of many of the commercial products that are out in the field today. He said this was an example of how valuable Doug had been to the organization and the community over the years. He introduced Doug's wife Deanna and remarked that they have three children and live here in Fayette County. He commented that Deanna was a fire officer in Henry County.

Chairman Dunn introduced Eugene Richardson who is a Plant Shift Leader at the Water System. He interjected that Pierce Newman also of the Water System having fifteen years of service was unable to attend the meeting.

Director of the Water System Tony Parrott remarked that Mr. Richardson had started with the Water System in September of 1986. He said Mr. Richardson had been with the Water System for the start up of two different plants. He said he was a certified Class I operator, certified lab analyst, and a shift leader for the day shift. He said Mr. Richardson was also a Fayette County native and attended school here. He remarked that Mr. Richardson had been an outstanding employee for fifteen years and the Water System appreciated the work that he had done.

DISCUSSION OF THE GEORGIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY'S PROPOSAL FOR EXPRESS BUS SERVICE INTO FAYETTE COUNTY:

Chairman Dunn remarked that this item would be an informational briefing that would be given by Jim Ritchey, Deputy Director of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority regarding express bus service into Fayette County.

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Chairman Dunn said he wanted to set the record straight. He said he had read in the newspaper that Fayette County had turned down this program. He remarked that statement was not true. He said Fayette County had not accepted it at this point. He said the county had tried and tried to get more information on it with which people could make a decent judgment. He said this briefing was part of that effort.

Chairman Dunn introduced Mr. Ritchey to Mayor Steve Brown of Peachtree City, Mayor Gary Laggis of Woolsey, Town Manager Barry Amos of Tyrone, Mayor Bobby Butler of Brooks and Mayor Pro Tem Larry Dell of Fayetteville. He said they had been invited to the meeting today because this was such an important thing for the whole county. He said any buses that would be accepted or rejected would be buses that would be scheduled or not scheduled to run through these cities. He said he wanted these individuals to be here so that they could have an equal opportunity with this Board to ask questions and get clarification on any questions there might be.

Mr. Ritchey said he wanted to talk about the Governor's transportation choices initiative. He said the Atlanta region had grown fabulously in the last forty or fifty years. He said during the last decade the growth had truly been phenomenal at approximately a 30% rate for the entire region. He said Fayette County had grown at approximately a 50% rate in the last ten years. He remarked that the growth had been phenomenal but with the growth had come traffic congestion. He said traffic congestion for every region of the area had become an issue that citizens have had to deal with in their day to day lives. He said traffic was a piece that had grown and would continue to grow. He commented on the air quality problem that the Federal Government determined that the Atlanta region had a lapse in its air quality conformity. He said as of this date the Atlanta region had not met the air quality conformity targets for the region. He said the region was set to meet those targets in 2004. He said in working to meet the air quality targets in the region, the Atlanta Regional Commission with the State of Georgia and local governments together developed a regional transportation plan. He said the RTP stated that in order to meet both land use transportation and air quality controls a combination of public transportation and highway transportation as well as some other land use initiatives are all part of this overall plan. He said earlier last year the Governor decided that he should work to advance projects in this plan. He said this could be done through the issuance of approximately \$8 billion of grant anticipation notes. He said honestly the Governor could not have picked a better time to pay low interest rates to borrow money for the future. He said the projects were approximately \$4 billion for highways and \$4 billion in transit projects. He said an important part of the transit project was the regional bus system.

Mr. Ritchey further commented that the plan had been developed in response to the Governor's initiative that would have 200 buses in a regional bus service. He remarked that MARTA currently operated approximately 700 buses. He said this would not be doubling the bus service but would be an incremental increase in bus service in the region

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with 200 buses in the regional bus service. He said a sketch plan was developed which he presented to the Board. He said it was this plan that showed generally how the bus service would work. He said generally the routes would run from the outlying communities either to the Atlanta CBD, MARTA rail stations or Hartsfield Airport. He said this plan was developed as a sketch plan in anticipation of completing a regional transit action plan. He said this was under way today and would be underway for the next year as it was being decided which would be the best route structure for this service ultimately to have.

Mr. Ritchey further commented he had presented the elected officials with a highlighted map indicating what was thought that might be appropriate in Fayette County. A copy of the map, identified as "Attachment No. 1", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof. He said there might be a route to Peachtree City to Hartsfield Airport that would begin in 2003 and a route from Fayetteville to Hartsfield to begin in 2004. He said these were put together simply to begin the discussion and not to presume that those had to be the services that would be operating. He said this plan was put together by the State, but while it had money for road projects, it did not have dollars for the transit system operating costs. He said the State expected to recover approximately one third of the cost of the system out of fares and from the operation of the bus system approximately 20% would come from future Federal Formula Funds. He said the State needed partners in order to start this service. He said GRTA developed a program of spending \$350 million of the GARVEY funds for arterial road improvements. He said there needed to be \$35 million in operating funds and there was \$350 million in road funds. He said they wanted to create a simple business arrangement. He said the State would provide each county accelerated highway projects which had to be in the plan although they might be further out. He said there would be \$350 million for the counties' highway projects in turn for \$35 million in operating funds for the regional bus service. He said the numbers for Fayette County were \$14 million for highway improvements and approximately \$1.4 million for transit funds.

Mr. Ritchey further remarked that GRTA's responsibilities in this program would be to buy the buses and would use a combination of Federal and State grant funds to buy these. He said they would work collaboratively with the communities to decide how the buses would work, where they would run from, where the park and ride lots would be to the extent that public facilities might be used for that. He said if land needed to be purchased to build park and ride lots or if shopping centers could be used, then that could be done. He said the State's responsibilities would be to run the bus service and to make the money that the counties' provide last through fiscal year 2005. He said this would get the system in operation for three years. He stated the counties' responsibilities would obviously be cash and secondly to identify the arterial road projects. He said thirdly the State would want to make sure that on the arterial road projects that they were friendly to pedestrians with sidewalks involved, bus stops and shelters if they were appropriate in certain situations. He said the counties could elect to build the projects themselves or work with GDOT to

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build the projects. He said that was what was happening with all of the projects now. He said GDOT would be the implementor of the projects.

Mr. Ritchey further commented that as this was moved along, the State understood while it first sent out agreements between the county and GRTA there was a four party agreement. He said that today he had previously presented Chairman Dunn with the most recent draft of that agreement. He said in the four part agreement, there was the State road and toll way authority that would provide the bond funds that was part of the agreement. He said they would actually have to hold interest in the highway projects until the bonds were paid off. He said the SRTA would have to have a financial interest in those projects. He said GDOT was part of the agreement because it was expected that they would actually be executing some of these. He said GRTA and the county would also be included.

Mr. Ritchey further commented on one last important piece of the project that he was sure the county was aware of. He said there was a formula in the State called congressional balance. He said the county has had highway projects where hiccups have occurred and the county was told that was because of congressional balance. He stated there was a State law that required highway funds that come through GDOT have to be balanced across the congressional districts. He said congressional balance did not apply to these funds and it was most important because this meant that it would bring the county arterial projects on a schedule that the county could be certain of so that they were not taken somewhere else.

Mr. Ritchey said there was also one of the more perplexing issues that had been dealt with. He said it never seemed that a highway project could be built for the budget it started with. He stated if the scope changed and things happened that were not expected to be there then the costs would increase. He said the first drafts of the agreement put this entirely on the county. He said regardless of what the cost overrun was, the county would have to come up with the dollars. He said this version of the agreement allowed the county to seek additional assistance through the State through the normal TIP process in the event that there were cost overruns. He remarked it still might not go as far as we would all like it to but they would also have to be assuring the bond holders that were building projects that they would get built. He said this continued to be somewhat of an issue.

Mr. Ritchey further remarked that in order to be in the program for fiscal 2003, the State had asked counties to provide a list of their road projects back in November, 2001. He said unfortunately Fayette County did not provide a list to the State to work with at that time. He said the State had assumed that Fayette County had decided not to participate. He said there was a deadline of February 28th, 2002 to adopt a resolution as a notice of intent and then there was a deadline at the end of March, 2002 to adopt this agreement.

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He said he had asked the executive director what he should say if Fayette County asked if they could still get in. He said he felt the answer was yes, but the State could not get projects in the 2003 TIP at this point in time. He said projects that the State would move forward would be in the 2004 TIP. He said many of the projects the county had considered would have been there anyway but the State would be glad to explore with Fayette County its projects and agreement if the county so desired. He said he would be glad to answer any questions the Board or the Mayors of the municipalities in Fayette County might have.

Chairman Dunn said he would like to clarify that the last time he had spoken to Katherine Ross who was the Director of GRTA the figure was \$12 million and \$1.2 million for Fayette County. He asked if Fayette County had been bumped up with the amounts that Mr. Ritchey had just quoted.

Mr. Ritchey replied that he had asked Roger Hensey before he came to this meeting and he had said the amounts would be \$14 million and \$1.3 million. He said he suspected that these were numbers that the county and State could work with. He said these were targets.

Chairman Dunn suggested \$14 million from the State and nothing from the county.

Mr. Ritchey said the State could not do that. He said the State needed the dollars to run the bus services. He said this was the reason the State was proposing this simple business deal.

Chairman Dunn asked if any of the Commissioners or City representatives had any questions for Mr. Ritchey.

Commissioner Wells asked Mr. Ritchey to clarify the \$1.4 million or \$1.3 million for the buses. She asked exactly how that was going to be transmitted, by whom and what deadlines.

Mr. Ritchey responded that in the most recent agreement the State was asking for 20% of the dollars on July 1st, 2002. He said the ratio was more important than the number. He said he had understood that it was \$14 million and \$1.3 million. He said it could be \$12 million and \$1.2 million. He said he tried to go to what he understood to be the right source before he left the office. He said it was 20% that was to be provided by July 1st, 2002, 40% would be provided on or before December 31, 2002 and 40% by December 31, 2003.

Commissioner Pfeifer asked Mr. Ritchey if the \$1.3 million or the \$1.4 million figure was a one time payment.

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Mr. Ritchey replied yes. He said this would take the program until 2005. He said he was convinced when this service was started that buses in Fayette County would be full. He felt the bus service would do extremely well. He said there would be a service that everyone would have to decide how to support in the future. He said this was something that ultimately the Legislature and the local elected officials with the State officers would have to work to decide. He said after three years they would determine how successful the services have been. He said if they were as successful as he believed them to be, everyone would have to work together to determine how to finance them.

Commissioner Pfeifer asked what would happen if the service was as unsuccessful as he believed them to be.

Mr. Ritchey responded that one of the things that he tried to describe in transit service planning was a lot like a hardware store. He said if there was a product that was not selling, then you have to get rid of it and then get another product that would sell. He said the State would work with the county to revise, refine, and change the service as it goes along to try and find the right combination to make this service successful. He said if the service was not successful after the three year period, then it might be decided that the service should not continue after that. He said for three years the State intended to find the right mix in Fayette County to make this successful.

Commissioner Pfeifer asked Mr. Ritchey if Fayette County could unilaterally withdraw from the contract at the end of it.

Mr. Ritchey replied that the contract would terminate at the end of the three year period.

Commissioner Pfeifer asked if Fayette County would have any further obligation after that.

Mr. Ritchey replied that as he understood it, Fayette County would not have any further obligation after that period to sign onto the program.

Commissioner Frady asked Mr. Ritchey if Fayette County would have any further obligation if the program was not paying its own way.

Mr. Ritchey remarked that bus services would not pay their own way. He said the State's expectation was 25% to 30% and possibly 40% out of the fare box and the balance would come from a combination of Federal, State and Local funds.

Commissioner Frady asked what the county's portion would be.

Mr. Ritchey replied that he honestly did not know after 2006. He said the \$1.3 million should provide the share necessary for the first three years.

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Commissioner Frady clarified that they could lose \$5 million and the county would have to pay 30% or 40% of it.

Mr. Ritchey remarked in 2006 this was one of the issues that would have to be faced and that was how the service would continue if in fact it was working well.

Commissioner Frady commented that no one had approached him who was in favor of this proposal. He said he saw one e-mail where one person was in favor but that was the only one. He remarked that approximately three years or so ago the county failed the air quality test on one day. He said Fayette County was beat up over that. He said he did not know how this was running now. He asked Mr. Ritchey if he had any information on how often the air was tested in Atlanta and how often it failed.

Mr. Ritchey replied that he did not have all of the specific information. He said from the data that he had seen, the last two summers had been much better for air quality than three years ago. He said it was honestly a combination of weather, traffic and the fuel in the vehicles that were being operated that generated the air quality issues. He said the air quality issues were in fact caused by pollutants that come here from out of this region. He said what was generating this was not just in this region. He said the State was out of compliance and the plan to be in compliance included many things including the regional bus service.

Commissioner Frady felt if had been proven a fact that cars backed up in traffic were more hazardous than cars that could move and drive 50 miles per hour. He said the idling automobiles tended to put off more of these fumes than cars traveling faster. He said everyone in Fayette County was paying the State D.O.T. 11.5¢ in gasoline tax and also paying 18.4¢ to the Federal Government for every gallon of gas purchased. He said he would like to know what could be done to get some of this money back in Fayette County. He said Fayette County had been short changed here for years. He said he could remember when Gwinnett County got \$32 million one year and Fayette County received \$2 million. He said he could not remember when Fayette County received the last money for roads here. He felt somebody, without dangling a carrot, should be willing to give Fayette County its money back without having to go to bus service and having to incur future expenses that would cost a lot more than what the State would give the county.

Mr. Ritchey said he felt the right way to work to obtain projects would be to continue to work within the process. He said this would be to work with the D.O.T., the D.O.T. Board, D.O.T. Staff and the Atlanta Regional Commission Staff. He said one of the things that was in the current T.I.P. was substantial advancement of projects. He said many projects in the region were advanced although he had not brought a copy of the list from Fayette County. He said he did not know if projects in Fayette County were being advanced.

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Commissioner Frady remarked Fayette County had many projects that had been turned down. He said he understood the bottle neck on S.R. 54 in Peachtree City was probably on line ready to go. He stated out of all the projects that Fayette County had here at the time that were shut down were no longer on the books until 2020. He said it just did not seem fair to him that governments would withhold monies that have come from Fayette County. He felt the government should give this money back to the county for roads. He said now the L.A.R.P. program was shut down. He said the county now gets \$311,000 and it had been getting over \$700,000 just to resurface roads. He said the money would provide for roads to be resurfaced every eighty years instead of the eight to ten year term now. He said these issues weighed on his mind very heavily. He said he could not be persuaded to support some of this mainly because the citizens do not seem to want it. He said he just could not see the money that the system was offering was very substantial and he felt this would continue to cost Fayette County citizens more money than if the county approved this.

Chairman Dunn remarked that Mr. Ritchey had stated that the best thing the county could do would be to work within the system. He said he was on the executive committee of the A.R.C. and on the Transportation Air Quality Board. He remarked that over the last several years there were thirteen counties with ten counties in the A.R.C. and three counties added because of non-compliance. He said the Chairmen of all these counties and representatives from the Cities have been participating in this for years. He said all of the elected officials for this region developed a plan that was a twenty-five year plan. He said it was a plan that the elected officials developed that was submitted to the Federal Government and they were deemed to meet conformity. He said Fayette County had been deprived of these Federal and State monies that Commissioner Frady referred to for the last four or five years. He said there had been lawsuits and everything else. He said they had come up with a plan that was conforming. He said that was the system and all of the counties had projects in that system. He said now the Governor's initiatives took that plan and turned it upside down. He said the Governor had taken all of the big money projects for the north side and moved them forward. He said there was all kinds of money for the northern arc, the railways, and buses for some of the bigger counties. He said no one could take all of that money and move it forward without taking the little guy's money and moving it back. He remarked on the State proposing to fund the northern arc for example with the current price tag of \$2.3 billion. He said GDOT had said that would only pay for half of the project. He said half of the \$8 billion plus that had been loosened up was for the Atlanta region or \$4.2 billion from down on high. He said this would not be coming down from on high because somebody in Washington liked Fayette County but because this was Fayette County's tax money. He said this was the tax money that Fayette County had been deprived of because of non-compliance. He said finally when Fayette County made some progress on it the Governor flips it upside down and takes all of his projects and the total money for the big projects was more than \$4 billion.

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Chairman Dunn further remarked that the frustration was to hear someone like Mr. Ritchey to work through the system. He said the county had been trying to work through the system and it had gotten nothing. He said Fayette County was not a big county with millions of people and millions of cars transiting it every day. He said Fayette County did not create the pollution for Atlanta, but was the unwilling recipient of it. He said Fayette County was out of compliance one or two days a year because the wind blew South. He said he knew one thing, Fayette County was not polluting this area. He said there were no smoke stacks or power plants here either. He said Fayette County had been trying very hard and had done some very good regional planning. He said now this program would take \$350 million and the Governor was giving it to GRTA and tells them to go out and get a bus system. He said the Governor would get what he wanted by making Fayette County give the State \$1.3 million just to have access to its own tax money that had been denied to the county for the last three or four years. He said the State was saying that the county could not have its own money back for its road work until Fayette County put a bus system in that the county may or may not want and it may or may not be effective. He said the reason Fayette County had not signed on yet was because the Board was trying to find out if this was a good thing for Fayette County. He said it did not sound good. He said this had been a frustrating issue for the Commissioners. He said Fayette County could go either way on this whichever way the majority wanted to go. He said the fact was that the State was making the county take a bus system that did not seem like it was the right time or right place. He said he had asked GRTA if they could do an experimental program and he was told no. He said the Governor wanted the commitment money right now.

Chairman Dunn questioned what if Fayette County had a bus system that no one would ride. He said although GRTA thinks the buses would be full this Commission felt the buses would not be full. He said the buses might be full ten years from now if the population were to double in Fayette County. He said every survey that the Board had seen said that citizens were willing to drive an hour to Atlanta and back as long as when they got back to Fayette County the area looked like it did now instead of the way it looked in other areas. He asked Mr. Ritchey what was express about a bus that was in the traffic that was currently outside. He said Fayette County had no express lanes and no HOV lanes. He said there was no interstate in Fayette County. He said he had been asking these questions for a while. He asked Mr. Ritchey to give the Commission something that they could work with. He asked why Fayette County should be denied its tax money just because the plan that GRTA had developed did not seem appropriate to Fayette County. He said he felt this was the frustration most people felt here.

Mr. Ritchey responded that there had been good and friendly conversation with the Commission on this issue. He said he had certainly enjoyed meeting the Board and coming to share the information about this service so that Fayette County could make a very reasonable decision. He said Chairman Dunn had warned him about coming down to explain this service to the Board and the possibility that the Board might not agree with

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him. He said he wanted to come anyway to have the discussion and the dialogue. He said he absolutely understood the Board's perspective on the evolution of the program and how it was working. He said he was not at liberty to change it or to even discuss changes in it. He said he was here to present the offer that the State could make and to offer his real commitment to work with Fayette County whether this was the right time or whether it was another time in the future. He said he believed and he felt he would see as the services were implemented in 2003 that they would be well received in many places. He said he was not going to say to the Board that every route and every bus would be full. He said changes would be made as the program progressed. He said if Fayette County decided that this was something that was not appropriate for Fayette County now, he hoped as things moved forward that Fayette County might decide in the future to join in. He said one of the key pieces that GRTA wanted to implement early was a bus service in Clayton County because that was on the Southside. He said the bus service in Clayton County started with fifteen buses and another twelve buses were under construction for a second and third phase expansion. He said GRTA was a partner with the county on that local system. He said that was not one that was intended to be the regional system. He said there were a lot of local stops every corner or two. He said if Fayette County were to decide that there were some pieces in Fayette County that it wanted to explore, he would be glad to come down and work with the county on that basis. He said in regard to this regional system and the arterials program, this was the arrangement that he was able to come and share.

Commissioner Frady remarked that an entrepreneur had come to Fayette County several years ago and tried a bus service. He said the gentleman went broke trying this. He said he was running a bus from Fayetteville into Peachtree City.

Chairman Dunn said it was pretty logical that the routes that GRTA had chosen were the biggest North/South routes in Fayette County. He commented that people had tried this before in Fayette County and failed. He said he had never seen a government transportation system or anything else that would work better than private enterprise.

Mr. Ritchey replied that private enterprise would be hired to operate this service. He said since the 1960's and 1970's they had not recovered their operating costs from the fare box. He said he had begun his transit career after he left the University of Virginia and he went to work for Duke Power Company. He said this was a private company running the bus system in Durham. He said he still remembered quite well that his first job was to figure out how to save them approximately \$1,500,000 per year in operating subsidy. He said at the time Duke Power was having to subsidize and they could not make money at it. He said private enterprise had not been able for years to make money. He said this was because the price of gasoline was so low as compared to the world economy. He said as long as a driver was being paid you could not make money on the service. He said one of the things that the Board would see GRTA announce during the next couple of weeks

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would be a van pool program. He said in the van pool program the drivers were volunteers. He said there were some of them here already that Metro Van was operating. He said the State would be operating a van pool program that hopefully would have some vans operating here in Fayette County. He said those vans would be operated on a break even basis but only because the drivers were volunteers. He said when you get into the business of paying that driver, you could not make a bus system operate on anything close to a break even basis.

Commissioner VanLandingham asked if any of the municipalities' representatives had any questions.

Woolsey Mayor Gary Laggis asked Mr. Ritchey if any of the other Southern Crescent Counties such as Coweta, Clayton or Henry had elected to participate.

Mr. Ritchey responded that they had all adopted the resolution of intent to participate. He said they were working through the negotiations with them on this current model agreement. He said he expected that there were eleven counties who had given resolutions of intent. He said he did not expect that all eleven counties would ultimately decide that they would join. He said he expected almost all of the eleven counties would sign, but he also felt that at the end of March there might be some who had decided not to participate. He said at this point the two counties who have not wanted to participate at this point were Cherokee County and Fayette County. He said all of the other counties had elected to participate.

Chairman Dunn remarked that many of the Chairmen of the other counties who go to meetings with him were working their way through this proposal with ARC and GRTA and had huge problems with this proposal. He said they were not so sure where they would come out and not so sure if they could get a vote to spend the money this way. He said in Gwinnett County GRTA wanted \$3,300,000 right away and they already had a bus system and the State was making Gwinnett take another system just so they could access their money.

Mr. Ritchey said the buses were full in Gwinnett County. He said more buses were needed there and this was simply a way for the county to get road money as the bus service was doubled in Gwinnett County.

Chairman Dunn said they had asked for a credit for the buses they had already purchased and the State said no. He said Clayton County had the same thing going over there. He said the State got them the buses and were making them take more buses so they could access their own tax money.

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Mr. Ritchey remarked in the region today there were approximately 800 buses including 700 MARTA buses, 60 buses in Cobb County and some more in Gwinnett County and Clayton County. He said the State was proposing to add approximately 200 more buses for a 25% increase. He said the honest reason to say no that a county could not take a credit for that was because there might be 100 additional buses on the road if the State started giving credits for all of the counties that were running the services. He said the State had tried to make this a simple business deal so that a 25% increase could be added regionally in the amount of transit service that was offered. He said that was not a huge increase but one where the State would like to get more people who would use transit in this region.

Peachtree City Mayor Steve Brown said he had grown up with regional transportation and mass transit. He said he had grown up in DeKalb County and moved later to Cobb County when CCT came up. He said he was very familiar with the process. He said in essence what had always been done with the system in Atlanta was retrofitting to get around the problems that had been created. He said he had spoken with members of the ARC about the possibility of purchasing virgin land in the southern crescent counties some thoroughfares and right-of-ways for these. He said this would alleviate the situation currently with the northern arc where the State would have to tunnel through \$500,000 home subdivisions and things of that nature. He said this would probably get the people in the southern crescent a lot more interested in what GRTA had to say. He said he had spoken with Mayors from all over the southern crescent counties in subregional meetings and they did not see anything coming this way that would keep this region from ending up like the northern counties. He felt some of these problems needed to be addressed well in advance. He said Peachtree City had supported the van pooling and this was working in Peachtree City. He stated he had gotten some good reviews from that and he was in favor of that type of transportation. He said one thing that he was worried about was the proposed route. He said the proposed route hits Fairburn and then goes straight down to the S.R. 54/S.R.74 intersection. He remarked this was one of the worst intersections in all of Fayette County. He said the last thing he needed in Peachtree City under his jurisdiction was another regional traffic pull at the S.R. 54/S.R. 74 intersection. He said he would be happier if he could get something in the industrial area that would pull some regional traffic but it would really be tough for Peachtree City to go with this plan when there would be no money to support infrastructure. He said there had been efforts for years to try and get the S.R. 74 South end of that intersection widened. He said he had a letter from Governor Zell Miller saying that this would be done during his administration and to date nothing had been done. He said obviously Peachtree City was making a lot of promises to its industrial clients who were moving in, paying their taxes and doing what they needed to do and Peachtree City could not hold up its end of the bargain. He said when he lived in DeKalb County and the train stations were built, he would go and catch the trains and the parking lots were all full with vehicles with Gwinnett County tags. He said if Fayette County did have this type of service there would be a lot more traffic from

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Coweta and the interior of Fayette County as well as South Fayette County. He said this system would cause Peachtree City some severe hardships if a bus station was located anywhere in that vicinity.

Chairman Dunn remarked that area would be a logical place because of its location but he did agree with Mayor Brown. He commented on Peachtree City's van pools. He said these van pools were private enterprise. He said what he was afraid of was getting in a government operation that would run out some of the county businesses. He said it would be hard to compete with the government system when the government system would not be paying their drivers.

Mr. Ritchey interjected that none of the van pools paid their drivers. He said the drivers in each case of a van pool were typically a volunteer whether this was run through metro van pool or somewhere else.

Commissioner Frady remarked the van pool system in Peachtree City started approximately twenty years ago. He said there were only three or four vans.

Mr. Ritchey remarked that one of the pieces that Mayor Brown had suggested was there needed to be thinking long term about land use and transportation connections. He said he was aware that Fayette County had very much tried to look at its development patterns and development permitting and trying to really balance services with the population that was coming. He said the line that was coming down S.R. 74 to Peachtree City parallels a railroad corridor that was at least targeted to be part of a commuter rail operation. He said staff had contemplated that the stations that were park and ride lots would be constructed where the county would want future commuter rail stations. He said this was a very important process that GRTA would need to go through with Fayette County to select what would work best for the community today and the community of tomorrow. He said GRTA was trying to target the bus services in part to be in support of what the regional play might be and what might be supportive of the Peachtree City community. He said he had no expectation that anyone would want to put a park and ride lot in the middle of the S.R. 54/S.R. 74 intersection. He agreed that this would create more trouble than anyone would want. He said the location would need to be decided on together.

Chairman Dunn remarked that the LCI Grant indicated that there would be some sort of rapid transit station in the area of the West Village.

Mayor Brown interjected that the LCI Committee threw out the rail station component. He said it did list if there was a site where a station could go, it would be in the industrial area to the south of the S.R. 54/S.R. 74 intersection. He said Peachtree City was probably the foremost city in the United States in terms of getting people on the streets in a non-automotive capacity. He said Peachtree City was doing some things with that corridor to

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enhance that type of thing. He said Peachtree City was getting D.O.T. to work with it and think outside the box. He said he would also like to have some discussions with GRTA as well.

Mr. Ritchey remarked he would be glad to explore these with Peachtree City. He said the LCI initiative was an important one that GRTA was certainly partners in making happen.

Commissioner VanLandingham said it was his understanding that this was going to be an authority of somewhat. He said if an authority was in debt that it could not go out of existence. He said the county would have to pay back a lot of money in three years time or it would be facing this monster for a long time. He expressed concern that this would one day merge into the MARTA group and he felt their problems were something that belonged in Atlanta and not here. He remarked that Fayette County was making contributions to the M&O. He asked if Fayette County would be part of a large group or would it pay for only the buses that ran in Fayette County. He referred to what mayor Brown had brought up and that was if the line was not carried further than this then Fayette County would not be helped at all. He said a large portion of traffic at rush hour was coming from Pike County, Spalding County, Clayton County and Coweta County. He said Fayette County would not be helped all that much by bringing this system here. He said the proposed trial period was three years. He said he and his wife were in Clayton County last week during rush hour and they had seen five C-Span buses and on those five buses there were four people riding. He felt like M&O would be even greater than the revenue from fares. He said he felt the revenue from fares was probably a little bit over stated.

Commissioner VanLandingham further commented on the cost overruns on construction that the county could find financing for. He said he was pretty well satisfied with the way it was now. He said he would like to have Fayette County's money back that it was putting in for taxes that was supposed to go for roads. He said he recalled Mr. Ritchey mentioning congressional reapportionment. He said Fayette County did not have that. He said now in order to get it back, Fayette County would have to eat something that was very distasteful. He said on that principle alone he would be willing to turn his back on it. He felt if it had to be that way, then there was something wrong with it.

Mr. Ritchey said he was aware that there could be disagreement and yet the county and the State could find ways through those disagreements to work together in the future. He said he absolutely understood this perspective.

Commissioner VanLandingham said he had grown up in Columbus, Georgia where there had been a bus service from the beginning and it had been a successful operation. He said there had been something there that was not in Atlanta and that was that it was a local system and not regional.

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Chairman Dunn felt like an express bus needed some way of going quicker than cars to be effective. He said Fayette County did not have express lanes, interstates or HOV lanes. He said no one could drive a bus any quicker through Riverdale coming out of Fayette County than one could drive a car. He said he just did not see how this would be effective. He said a person could sit in traffic on S.R. 74 waiting in line to get to interstate 85 in the morning rush. He said a bus would just be sitting in that lane too because there was no other way for the bus to go. He said even the HOV lanes that were contemplated in the next five years down to Newnan do not contemplate separate entrances here to get on the HOV lanes. He said there was no way for an express bus to be express. He felt this would hurt the ridership too in addition to the general attitude that had been seen in Fayette County citizens that they were reluctant to give up their cars at this point in their history. He said many people had moved here because Fayette County was the way it was. He said the citizens wanted it to stay that way as long as possible. He said ten years from now it might be so crowded that people would welcome a bus but right now he was not so sure. He said his biggest concern was that the Governor had taken and put all of his priorities on top of the ARC's twenty-five year plan and put all of his money into his projects that the only money available for a county might be GRTA's \$350 million. He said if Fayette County did not take that, then it would not get 5¢ in the next decade. He felt it was not the right time nor the right place for this system. He said he also felt people would not use the system that often down here. He said the State was saying if people did not use the system, then Fayette County's M&O share of this would be bigger and bigger. He said he had asked ARC and GRTA what would happen after that time. He said the answer was that they did not know yet.

Mr. Ritchey remarked that the State had a cooperative relationship outlined through this contract. He said at the termination of the contract the State would not know.

Chairman Dunn said if he gave Mr. Ritchey \$1.2 million right now to access \$12 million and the road projects take several years, he wondered if Fayette County would still receive money if the buses were cut off in 2005. He asked if the State would still help the county build roads if the buses were cut out.

Mr. Ritchey remarked the county would have paid the \$1.2 million to GRTA. He said the State's contract called for the State to provide Fayette County over the period of this agreement \$12 million. He said the contract called for this and he expected GRTA would stand by this.

Chairman Dunn remarked that the system Mr. Ritchey said he worked in did not give money but gave Fayette County positions on lists that would last for years. He said Fayette County did not normally get a check. He said the money comes down from GDOT and they pay for part of it, the Feds pay for part of it and the county pays for part of it. He said Fayette County did not see those checks.

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Mr. Ritchey stated that each project that would be constructed had a degree of complexity with how it was constructed. He said he did believe that one of the alternatives for the county was to complete the projects themselves rather than through GDOT. He said in completing that work he believed the arrangement made sure that the option was there and the county would be paid for the costs that were incurred in completing that work. He said the county would see the checks for that. He said the alternative that most of the counties have said they would prefer was for GDOT to actually do the project construction.

Commissioner Frady remarked if AMTRAK was losing money and MARTA was losing money then he could not imagine an entrepreneur going into business in something that was known to be losing money before it started. He said this made no sense to him. He said the other thing that was worrying him at this point about the citizens' tax dollars was that the water committee that the Governor had formed. He said if the county did have the \$1.2 million right now, he did not know if it would be for water. He said he just could not put this burden on the taxpayers.

Chairman Dunn said he had also pursued the idea of taking part in what was going on at ARC and GRTA. He said he understood that this was the precursor of a regional transportation rapid transit system.

Mr. Ritchey remarked that there would be extensions of transit beyond the current MARTA system. He said the regional transit plan and the regional transit action plan would help decide what it would be. He said there were not at this time other rapid transit improvements that were in the program. He said there could be in the future and he looked forward to working collaboratively with the ARC and the counties to decide which ones they should be.

Chairman Dunn said this system would be the precursor of a regional transportation. He said it was the Governor's intent to lash up the thirteen metro counties that were non achieving in E.P.A. business into a regional transportation network. He said there was a regional transportation network that was MARTA. He said MARTA was doing fine until the Federal monies ran out and now Fulton County and DeKalb County have to pay the lion's share of that themselves. He said those two Chairmen have gone to the Governor and said that they could not do it anymore. He said this was breaking the backs of their citizens. He said he was talking about millions and millions of dollars that those two counties have put up for MARTA. He said the Governor had said that it was not his problem. He said those two Chairmen were coming back to ARC now and saying that everybody would have to pay for MARTA. He said Fayette County was not part of MARTA now but if the bus line comes in it would be part of MARTA. He said he would suspect that it would not be long before everybody who was part of the MARTA system gets tagged for dues in the MARTA system the way they do for ARC, the water board and everything else

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that had gone regional. He said maybe Fayette County was better off not taking the buses so that it would not have to pay MARTA dues a couple of years from now.

Commissioner Frady asked if there was a 1% tax now in the counties that use MARTA.

Chairman Dunn replied it was a 1¢ sales tax.

Mr. Ritchey stated that was paying its way in MARTA. He said MARTA did not have a problem with the 1¢ sales tax generating sufficient dollars but the legislative action that had remained from the 1960's. He said half of those dollars had to be used for capital and half could be used for operating. He said there was action before the General Assembly now that the Governor did support and that would permit MARTA to change that ratio to 55% to support the operations and 45% to go to capital. He said as the system had grown, that ratio should have grown with it. He said when the system builds out, the county should not expect to remain paying half of income for future capital. He said the MARTA system did recover that. He said the counties would like to be relieved of that 1¢ sales tax and have it region wide.

Chairman Dunn said they were up at every meeting posturing for that and he did not blame them. He said it was not just the citizens in their counties who used it. He said right now Fayette County did not pay for the MARTA system and he was really concerned that in the long run GRTA wanted to put together a regional transportation system that all of the counties would be sending money to the State to help run.

Mr. Ritchey replied that 12% of the riders on MARTA come from counties other than Fulton and DeKalb. He said the other counties were getting somewhat of a free ride on MARTA today. He said it was true, as Mayor Brown had observed in DeKalb County, that the park and ride lots at MARTA were full of cars that have Gwinnett County tags. He said what the right solution was as to how this should be shared for the financing of this system was absolutely a debate that would occur in the General Assembly he was sure in the coming years. He said he looked forward to having Fayette County as part of that debate. He said he certainly understood the perspective.

Chairman Dunn said what scarred him was the legislation that Governor Barnes had put out that created GRTA. He said they had already said that GRTA could make a lot of decisions and they could punish the counties if they did not agree with GRTA. He said the way it was now was that Fayette County could not get out its own tax money that its citizens paid unless Fayette County paid GRTA to get to it. He said this was not right.

Commissioner Pfeifer said everyone was getting a free ride on Fayette County's money because the county would not get any of the money back. He said those arrangements were cooperative arrangements where the State and the Federal Government would serve

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as the collection point to take care of the needs of the citizens and they were not doing it. He said he certainly did not trust them to enter into a new business arrangement where they have agreed to do something for this money. He said they have not done it and now they wanted the county to give them more money and maybe they would do it then.

Chairman Dunn said the ARC was the regional development for Fayette County. He asked if the money was supposed to funnel through there.

Mr. Ritchey replied that all of the monies programmed in the TIP would funnel through there.

Chairman Dunn said the people down here who are part of that were no longer the decision makers. He said now the State was changing it. He said the last time he checked nobody in GRTA was elected to anything. He said the representatives get elected to represent their communities and the individuals in GRTA were appointed by the Governor to enforce his program. He said this was what this issue was all about when you come down to it. He said he did not remember anyone coming down here and doing a study of Fayette County of its roads. He said GRTA had decided Fayette County needed buses because somebody said that everybody needed buses. He said there was no study anywhere that indicated that this was what Fayette County should be doing or it was going to help air pollution or help traffic.

Mr. Ritchey replied that the study was the one currently underway. He said they were trying to get the service implemented as quickly as possible. He said GRTA had put forth a plan that the State was ready and willing to modify the routes and frequencies. He said this was intended to allow the State and the counties to have a debate about what was the right service to have.

Commissioner VanLandingham asked how the M&O cost would be distributed to the counties participating. He asked if it would be ridership, population, or everybody taking care of the buses running in their county.

Mr. Ritchey replied that the basic concept was honestly for each county. He said the State had tried to develop what it thought were reasonable routes. He said the State then determined the number of buses that would be operating on those routes. He said assuming that a bus operated six hours a day or three hours in the afternoon. He said they use \$75 per bus hour and subtract one-third from fares and that was the balance. He stated the cost model that came up with the \$1.3 million and the \$12 million in arterials was based on buses and how many buses were operated and then an hourly and annual operating cost per bus to build it up. He said that was actually how the numbers were arrived at.

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Commissioner VanLandingham asked who had come up with the proposition that Fayette County would have to give the GRTA money in order to get its money. He asked how that was justifiable.

Mr. Ritchey replied that he could continue to have a very good debate about transit and regional transit being a State responsibility, a Federal responsibility or a local responsibility. He said this proposal was premised on it being a shared responsibility that each level of government would need to come up with dollars to help pay for it. He said this was an honest attempt by Georgia State Government to give counties a real incentive to get into providing local funds for the transit operation. He said apparently in Fayette County it was not enough of an incentive or the right incentive or it was coming at the wrong time. He said he certainly understood that. He said everyone could debate if it should be the State

doing this or the Feds doing it or the locals doing it. He stated the truth was that all across this Country the majority of systems operate as a tri-party partnership consisting of Federal money, State money and local money that operate the services. He said this was a way for counties to be able to buy in to the beginnings of operating this regional service.

Commissioner VanLandingham stated the county had already bought in. He said he thought when Fayette County's tax money was sent in that put Fayette County in. He said now Fayette County had to put in money to get its money back. He asked Mr. Ritchey why the county had to pay \$1.4 million to get \$12 million back when it was the county's money to begin with.

Mr. Ritchey replied the offer that he was authorized to make was precisely that. He said he was not able to articulate any better why the arrangement was put together in the manner that it was. He said it was to be a partnership with the county for both the road projects and the transit system. He remarked in being partners the county and the State would not always agree.

Commissioner VanLandingham interjected if the partnership got to be a little more equal, it might be a little bit better to deal with. He said Fayette County was not an equal partner in this.

Chairman Dunn felt there should be a willingness on the part of two partners to make a deal. He asked the municipality representatives who were present if they had anymore questions or comments.

Mayor Steve Brown of Peachtree City said from his perspective personally he was trying to deal with a lot of transportation concerns in his jurisdiction. He said Mayor Steele of the City of Fayetteville had spoken out in some mayors' meetings that he needed to have a bypass built and this just kept stalling out. Mayor Brown said he himself had some major

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industrial concerns that want to widen the road. He said these were serious economic development questions that were not expensive in the big picture. He said when the Governor goes and spends \$2.4 million on the northern arc he did not see this as being an air quality enhancement but more of furthering development northward. He remarked Fayette County was a little hesitant to start buying into a lot of those programs. He said historically Fayette County had not been given its due and now the county was told that this would happen now. He stated he would like to see a little bit more out of the State agencies and authorities in terms of getting Fayette County to where it should be first.

Mr. Ritchey remarked that each of the representatives had observed that there were projects that the State would love to see built. He said that was a lot of the rationale behind this project. He said State wide when the \$350 million was put in and it went State wide, Atlanta would get a small portion. He said if the \$350 million was taken out of the entire State pot and instead put only in the Atlanta region, then the \$350 million would go for all of the arterials. He said in each county and in each community there were great projects that were not necessarily expensive and they were all part of the plan that needed to be advanced now. He said each county that he had gone to had expressed the same frustration that they have such great need and so little resource coming in. He said the arterial program was intended now for \$350 million that this region was really not getting before. He said this money was in the State pot and now the State was trying to get this money in the region to get real projects that were necessary whether they were for economic development or traffic. He said this was the offer before the Board. He said he understands the distastefulness that the county feels and also the frustration but it was the business arrangement that GRTA was able and ready to offer Fayette County now. He said he would be delighted to work with Fayette County. He said if this was not the right time, he hoped that the county would invite him back at another time that it might be.

Commissioner VanLandingham said he would like Mr. Ritchey to take a proposal back to the State. He said if the State would take the \$1.4 million that the county was supposed to send and give Fayette County \$12.6 million that would go along way in solving some of the problems right here in Fayette County without a bus service.

Chairman Dunn said he did not know how to say this any clearer. He said Fayette County did not need the State to tell it how to spend \$12 million on its own roads. He said Fayette County did a good job of taking care of its own road problems but the county needed its money back from the State to do this.

Commissioner Frady felt there would be better spent money trying to get a release of funds through some system where the county could get its money back.

Chairman Dunn said the Board would be discussing this further and would take a vote at a subsequent meeting as to whether it wanted to reject this offer. He commended Mr.

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Ritchey for doing a tremendous job. He pointed out what a difficult situation Mr. Ritchey had in front of him. He also thanked the cities for their representation at this meeting.

Mr. Ritchey thanked the Board and stated he would be glad to come back any time.

PRESENTATION OF JUNE 30, 2001 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND REPORTS BY THE COUNTY'S ACCOUNTING FIRM OF GRANT THORNTON LLP:

Finance Director Mark Pullium remarked that Dick Swofford, the Director of Government Services in the firm of Grant Thornton LLP was present to make comments and provide information regarding the county's June 30, 2001 audited financial statements and reports as well as the Water System's Comprehensive annual financial report for June 30, 2001.

Dick Swofford remarked that the firm of Grant Thornton was an international C.P.A. firm with offices all across the world with approximately 55 offices in the United States. He said in the Atlanta office several years ago the firm had made a commitment to the governmental sector. He said many C.P.A. firms audit governmental entities as a filler type of work in the summer months only. He said Grant Thornton did not do that. He said Grant Thornton had several people in his office who were devoted to governmental work 100% of the time. He said he was one of those people. He said he pleased to be at the meeting today to talk about the results of the June 30, 2001 audit.

Mr. Swofford remarked that the Board should have a report entitled "Report to the Board of Commissioners". He said this was referred to as their SAS 61 letter. He said it was a letter with a green cover and was approximately four pages. He said the items in this letter were items that professional standards require the firm to communicate to the county. He said one related to Grant Thornton's responsibility as it related to the audit and the firm's responsibility that was required by an auditing standard and governmental auditing standards. He said that was basically to plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether or not the county's financial statements were free of material misstatement. He said Grant Thornton had done this. He said governmental auditing standards also require that the firm look at internal controls related to compliance issues. He said the firm had looked at those controls and tested those controls and had not found any reportable conditions related to the controls in effect. He said Grant Thornton was also required to test compliance related to the Federal and State grants. He said each grant could have different compliance issues. He said the firm had tested that and in the area of the single audit which was a separate report, Grant Thornton did not have any instances of a material nature to report.

Mr. Swofford further remarked that the firm was also required to inform the county of any selection of new accounting policies for the year ending June 30, 2001. He said the county was required to implement governmental accounting standards for statement number 33. He said implementation of this standard which basically related to non-

exchange revenues did require that the county go back to the July 1, 1999 fund balance and restate that fund balance. He said this required the county to adjust the fund balance by approximately \$650,000. He said this had to do with the timing of revenue recognition and what period the revenue should be recognized in. He said the firm also had responsibilities for any other documents that contain the financial statements and bond issuance would be one. He said included in the financial statements were also significant judgments. He said these would be the allowance for accounts related to taxes, the estimate of the landfill post closure cost and the insurance claims liability. He said the firm had performed tests of these accounts and the firm was satisfied that they were reasonable in all material respects.

Mr. Swofford further commented that the firm did not have any significant audit adjustments that they would not have expected to have. He said a significant adjustment would have been one that would not have been detected had there not been an audit. He said there were no disagreements with management during the course of the audit. He said management had informed the firm that they did not consult with any other accountants about auditing or accounting matters and the firm had not discussed any major accounting or auditing issues prior to the time that the firm was engaged as auditors.

Mr. Swofford said he would like to comment on the comprehensive annual financial report. He said if there were any questions that the Board might have, he would be glad to answer them. He asked the Board to turn to the tab entitled "Independent Auditors' Report". He said on page two in the last paragraph he had referred to the fact that GASB statement number 33. He said this was discussed further in footnote 1. He said the opinion on the financial statements was an unqualified opinion that stated the county was in good financial condition. He said he would address the general fund which was the major operating fund. He called the Board's attention to page 6 of the financial statements. He referred to the undesignated general fund balance. He said this was a little over \$13 million. He said that number was well within the acceptable parameters that the GFOA says is acceptable to a municipality. He said the county had in this undesignated fund balance approximately four and one half months of expenditures. He said it was well within the limits of the county's total revenue that the GFOA recommends.

Mr. Swofford called the Board's attention to page 11. He said this was a comparative statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance. He said that the revenues for the general fund were budgeted at \$35 million and came in at \$37 million with a \$1.9 million favorable variance there. He commented on total expenditures. He said approximately \$38 million was budgeted and only \$32 million was spent leaving this with a favorable balance of approximately \$6.5 million. He said a \$3.3 million deficit for the general fund had been budgeted and there this ended up as a \$8.4 million positive number. He said the county had implemented GASB 33 with the GASB 33 increase in the

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beginning fund balance of approximately \$650,000. He said this was all of the information he had on the county's financial statements.

Mr. Swofford remarked the firm prepared a separate report for the Water System and these financial statements were also included in the county's financial statements. He said the revenues for the Water System were a little short of \$11 million. He said revenues had decreased from what they were last year. He said the operating expenditures were \$4.4 million before depreciation which was an increase over last year. He said overall the operating income was \$6.4 million and this was down slightly from the prior year. He remarked there was a depreciation expense charge which was a non cash item so there was really an operating income of approximately \$3.4 million.

Mr. Swofford said he would like to thank the staff at the Water System and the County as well as the constitutional officers. He said everyone at Fayette County was very helpful and courteous and Grant Thornton had enjoyed doing this audit.

Chairman Dunn remarked that it was difficult for Grant Thornton to do the audit for the first time and difficult for the county to undergo the audit with Grant Thornton the first time. He said the county had another auditor for a long time and the Board just wanted new eyes looking at the books. He said the Board felt the county was in good shape and after the Grant Thornton audit it shows that the county is in good shape. He said this reinforces that the predecessors on this Board have done a good job. He said the county had also changed the Chief Financial Officer. He said the fact that the county could change the CFO as well as the auditors and come through this and have Mr. Swofford tell the Board the county was in good shape was really encouraging. He thanked Mr. Swofford for his hard work. He said he hoped that the relationship with Grant Thornton that started this year would continue for some time.

CONSENT AGENDA: On motion made by Commissioner VanLandingham, seconded by Commissioner Frady to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

BID AWARD - FLORIDA ROCK AND HANSON AGGREGATES FOR GRAVEL:

Approval of recommendation from Director of Public Works Lee Hearn that bid be awarded to Florida Rock and Hanson Aggregates furnish gravel for Fayette County's use during the calendar year 2002 as presented. A copy of the memorandum, identified as "Attachment No. 2", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

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BID AWARD - APAC - GEORGIA, INC. FOR ASPHALT AND BID AWARD - BALDWIN PAVING COMPANY FOR LEVELING MIXTURE: Approval of recommendation from Director of Public Works Lee Hearn that bid be awarded to APAC - Georgia, Inc. (Forest Park Plant) for the annual asphalt contract and bid awarded to Baldwin Paving Company for Leveling Mixture. A copy of the memorandum, identified as "Attachment No. 3", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

BID AWARD - MELTON PAINTING COMPANY - REPAINTING REAR OF STONEWALL PARAPETS: Approval of recommendation from Director of Maintenance to award bid to Melton Painting Company in the amount of \$6,800 to repaint the rear of the Stonewall parapets. Funds for this project are available in the present budget account 5454. A copy of the memorandum, identified as "Attachment No. 4", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

BID AWARD - DJ'S SERVICES - LANDFILL FENCING: Approval of recommendation by the Director of Engineering Ron Salmons to award the bid for Landfill Fencing to the low bidder DJ's Services for \$31,764 with the final cost of the work to be based on the actual length of fence installed. A copy of the memorandum, identified as "Attachment No. 5", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

KIWANIS CLUB - SIGN REQUESTS FOR GUN SHOW AND KIWANIS FAIR: Approval of request from Ron McCurry with the Fayette Kiwanis to erect an A-frame sign on the old courthouse lawn for dates (1) May 20-26, 2002, Gun Show, and, (2) September 16-20, 2002, Kiwanis Fair.

FAYETTE SOCIETY OF FINE ARTS - SIGN REQUEST FOR ART SHOW: Approval of request from Fayette Society of Fine Arts to place a sign on the old courthouse lawn from April 1st through April 7th, 2002 advertising an art show to take place at the Depot on April 13th and April 14, 2002.

BID AWARD - WILLOW CONSTRUCTION FOR RESERVOIR INTAKE STRUCTURE REPAIRS PROJECT: Approval of recommendation from the Director of the Water System Tony Parrott to award bid to low bidder Willow Construction in the amount of \$98,900 for the Reservoir Intake Structure Repairs Project. A copy of the memorandum, identified as "Attachment No. 6", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE - APPROVAL FOR THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO STUDY PORTIONS OF GINGERCake CREEK WATERSHED: Approval of request from the City of Fayetteville to allow the Corps of Engineers to study portions of GingerCake Creek watershed in the unincorporated county. A copy of the request, identified as "Attachment No. 7", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

LIVING STONES CHRISTIAN CENTER - SIGN REQUEST FOR "JESUS DAY PARADE AND ACTIVITIES AT STONEWALL COMPLEX AND HERITAGE PARK: Approval of request from the Living Stones Christian Center to hold a "Jesus Day Parade" starting at 9:00 a.m. on May 4th, 2002 beginning at Fayette County High School and proceeding to Hood Avenue, Highway 85 and on to the government complex at West Stonewall Avenue and to use the Stonewall Complex grounds featuring free activities such as a "moonwalk", slide, games, cold drinks and ending with a concert at Heritage Park with all of the festivities ending by 9:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Members of the public are allowed up to three minutes each to address the Board on issues of concern other than those items which are on this evening's agenda.

JILL HOLMES-LONG: Jill Holmes-Long, Executive Director of the Fayette Factor stated that two years ago the Fayette Factor had briefed the Board on the organization getting started in Fayette County and was applying for State funds. She said she was here today to let the Board know that the Fayette Factor was at the end of its first full year and received a 3/4 year grant from the State and how they had a full year grant. She said with that monies one of the things that they had done was to put together a Fayette County Help Resource Book. She said this echoed the idea of the United Way Help Book but it was exclusively Fayette County. She said it probably was not all inclusive of every service or non-profit that was in Fayette County but it was all of the ones who sent back the forms that they asked to. She said this was Fayette Factor's first effort. She presented the Board members with a copy of the Fayette County Help Resource Book. She thanked the Board members for the support they had given the Fayette Factor two years ago.

STAFF REPORTS:

EXECUTED JAIL INMATE AGREEMENT FROM THE TOWN OF TYRONE: Attorney Dennis Davenport asked for the Board's consideration in authorizing the Chairman to execute the Jail Inmate Agreement from the Town of Tyrone.

Chairman Dunn remarked that the provisions and the fees were identical to the other two cities.

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Attorney Davenport remarked that the only difference was the number of the reduced rate. He said it was different for all three cities but the concept was the same.

Commissioner Frady interjected that the Board had authorized the Chairman to execute this Agreement at the February 28th Commission meeting.

Chairman Dunn clarified that he had executed this Agreement at the last Commission meeting.

APPLICATION FROM THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR A 404 PERMIT FOR LAKE McINTOSH: Attorney Davenport asked for the Board's consideration in authorizing the Chairman to execute the 404 Permit in order to start the process.

On motion made by Commissioner Frady, seconded by Commissioner Wells to authorize the Chairman to execute the 404 Permit Application from the Army Corps of Engineers for Lake McIntosh. The motion carried 5-0. A copy of the Application, identified as "Attachment No. 8", follows these minutes and is made an official part hereof.

RENOVATION OF COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE: Chairman Dunn remarked on the renovation of the Commissioners' Office and the motion that was made to proceed with this renovation at the February 14th Commission meeting. He brought additional information to the Board regarding cost and details of the proposed renovation. He said this would involve renovation of Commissioners' office space and conference room. He said the purpose of the renovation was to build a bigger conference room and this would result in a lot of other things being done. He said he had objected to this on February 14th but the Board voted 4-1 to proceed with the renovation. He said there was a lot more information that he did not have on that night and some other people might not have had. He said he would like to discuss this and bring the information to the Board's attention. He said he wanted to make a motion in order for the Board to reconsider and discuss the proposed renovation that was voted for at the February 14th Commission meeting.

On motion made by Chairman Dunn, seconded by Commissioner Pfeifer for the Board to reconsider the renovation of the Commissioners' office that had been voted on at the February 14th Commission meeting, discussion followed.

Commissioner VanLandingham clarified that this was a motion only for rediscussion.

Chairman Dunn said the motion was to reconsider the motion made on February 14th. He said it was his understanding of a reconsideration to be that the Board could do something here tonight to invalidate what occurred on February 14th.

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Attorney Davenport interjected that if a topic was brought up under a motion for further reconsideration that passes, the Board could revisit that topic and could potentially make a substantive change to what occurred.

Commissioner Wells clarified that this motion would be for reconsideration.

The motion carried 3-2 with Commissioner VanLandingham and Commissioner Frady opposing the motion.

Chairman Dunn said he did not have information on the night of February 14th and the other Commissioners did not have information in front of them that night. He said he should have had this discussion tabled at that meeting but he had not done that. He said when he looked into the issue he found serious concerns that he had about this renovation. He said he felt the Commissioners' office space and conference room was more than adequate now. He said the purpose of this project was to make a bigger conference room because it gets crowded in there sometimes. He said the new conference room would be in the hallway by Commissioner VanLandingham's office. He said if the current conference room was too crowded then a meeting could be held in the Commission Chambers or Room 212 that would hold 50 to 60 people very easily. He said there would be rooms to go to without even leaving this building if the present conference room got crowded.

Chairman Dunn said he found out in looking into this matter further that this would be the fifth time since the county government had moved into this building that this area would have been renovated at taxpayers' expense. He said when the building was purchased and made into office space for the county there was a major renovation. He remarked three subsequent times taxpayers' money had been spent in moving the County Commissioners' office space around and putting up walls, taking down walls and moving things back and forth. He said this would be the fifth renovation in approximately twelve years that this space would have been renovated in this particular area. He pointed out that this area was for elected officials who were part-time employees. He said the Commissioners were not in their office space all day long nor the conference room. He said the data presented to the Board on February 14th did not include the costs for labor nor did it include any costs for refurbishing the conference room. He said the labor costs would bring the project from the estimated \$11,000 up to \$17,500. He stated the gentleman who had done the estimate works for the county and he had said that was a very, very conservative estimate and that figure was if absolutely nothing went wrong.

Chairman Dunn remarked there were no furnishings included in the quote. He said when he asked about the furnishings he was told that no new furnishings would go in the new conference room. He said his question was if there were no new furnishings then why did there need to be a new room. He said the same table and chairs that were currently in the

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conference room would be moved to the new conference room that would be twice as large. He said he just did not understand that. He said other people had told him that they thought new furnishings would go in the new room. He said the price of \$11,000 did not include any of that. He said this project would also include putting windows in the back of this building. He remarked there were cinder block walls all across the back of the building. He said two windows would be going in there. He pointed out there were two windows that were taken out during one of the other renovations of the building. He said this would be the exact same two windows that would be put in a different location. He said the two windows had been taken out of the end of the building and now eight years later the windows would be put back. He said in order to do that the cinder blocks would have to be taken out. He said this would cause all of the insulation to sift out of the cinder blocks. He said the people that he had spoken with here and outside of here said that they did not know how much of that would have to be replaced. He said when you break through cinder blocks you would not know how much of the insulation would fall out.

Chairman Dunn felt this all seemed a little unnecessary to him. He said there would also be some rerouting of air ducts for the air conditioning and heating system. He said this had also been done a little less than a year ago. He said this had taken several days with the repair crew relocating these ducts. He said every time the walls were moved then the air conditioning and heating had to be moved around in the ceilings of those rooms. He said the moving of ducts would have to happen again. He said the other issue that disturbed him even more was that this building currently had full time employees who had unsatisfactory working conditions particularly in the Human Resources Department and in the Information Systems Office. He said these offices were supposed to be a high priority for renovation in conjunction with some other things that were being done outside of this building. He said space was being created to move some people upstairs thereby giving these people good working conditions. He said he was informed by the same people who had done the estimates that if the Commissioners' Office project was going to be done then the other projects would be pushed back. He said these employees had been notified a couple of times that their projects had been pushed back. He said he thought in the past that one of the priorities of this Board was to take care of the full time employees who worked in this building all day long. He remarked that some employees never see the light of day. He said they had no windows and worked in little cubby holes all day long and they had not seen the light of day in years. He said a lot of their hallways were stuffed with boxes and files and this was becoming a difficult situation. He felt if any money was put into renovation it should be put into the space renovation for the full time employees and not for the Commissioners' Office.

Chairman Dunn remarked that the Commissioners' Office had very nice office space. He said none of the City Councilmen had an office. He said the Commissioners have nice offices and should have nice offices since they were dealing with the people. He said the conference room was also very nice. He said he felt like the expenditure of \$11,000 to

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\$20,000 was totally unnecessary. He said this would be the fourth renovations since 1992 plus the major renovation when the building was initially purchased. He said based on this information he was respectfully requesting the Commissioners to reconsider this project. He said he felt very strongly about this and this was the first time he had ever tried to change a decision made by the Board. He said he would like to make a motion to disapprove the renovation project previously voted on at the February 14th Commission meeting.

On motion made by Chairman Dunn, seconded by Commissioner Pfeifer to disapprove the renovation project previously voted on at the February 14th Commission meeting, discussion followed

Commissioner Pfeifer remarked that he had voted in favor of this project the first time based on what his understanding of the project was and the cost of \$11,000. He said Chairman Dunn had stated that he should have objected to this at the time and he said frankly he should not have voted on this if he did not fully understand the project. He said he apologized for that but this project was more than he anticipated it would be.

Commissioner Frady felt there was \$6,000 maybe in labor costs but that was not new money. He said there was \$11,000 in new money. He said he wanted to know about the four times previously that the Commissioners' Offices had been renovated since 1992.

Chairman Dunn replied that he had spoken with Director of Maintenance Jim George who had discussed the project. He said Mr. George had told him that this would be the fourth time that the Commissioners' Office had been renovated.

Commissioner Frady said the last time this was done it was to make the offices larger than 10x10. He said since the Commissioners were not here every day and staff members were the ones recommending this who were in the office every day, this was something to take into consideration. He said people could not all fit in the conference room when they had staff meetings. He said if the employees down the hall needed more space upstairs then they should be moved upstairs to 212 or whatever room would be appropriate and give them some office space up there. He said those employees should have a good working place too.

Chairman Dunn interjected that Commissioner VanLandingham was the person who made the motion to approve the renovation and not the staff. He said he had been briefed on this project several months ago and he said he had expressed extreme displeasure at the time. He said he had been told by the staff that this was not going to be brought up anymore.

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Commissioner Frady interjected that any item could be brought up whether the Chairman agreed with it or not.

Chairman Dunn said he understood that but he had been told by the staff that this issue would not be brought up and then it was brought up by Commissioner VanLandingham. He said this was certainly the right of Commissioner VanLandingham to do.

Commissioner Frady interjected that Commissioners could not bind other Commissioners in the future. He said staff members could not bind other staff members either.

Commissioner VanLandingham remarked that a few months ago the Commission was presented a proposal that was put together by staff. He said the entire Board was briefed on the proposal. He said he had walked into County Administrator Chris Cofty's office and this packet was laying on his desk. He said he asked Mr. Cofty where this issue stood. He said Mr. Cofty replied that staff was finished with the project and if anything was done with it the Commissioners would have to do it. He said it was staff's desire to put the packet together and he told Mr. Cofty that he would present this to the Commissioners. He said he had not poled anyone to see if the Commissioners agreed or disagreed. He said this was something that staff wanted to do. He said he saw a cost that he felt was not prohibitive. He said this would enhance the working conditions and would utilize 120 square feet that was considered useless hallway at the current time. He remarked this would give the Commission a larger conference room. He said he had presented it as \$11,220 in material with no labor costs included with a contingency of 10%. He said it would take approximately two weeks at night to complete. He said this was the manner in which it was presented to the Board. He said this was the way it would be done. He said he had spoken to staff before and he was assured that this was the cost. He said he had spoken to them since then and they will assure him that this would be the cost. He said to say that this had been four times was fine. He said this was definitely not to say that this was the panacea. He said if another need arose that would enhance the performance of staff, he would vote in favor of it again. He said if it would be a better way to serve the community, he would vote in favor of it again.

Commissioner VanLandingham further remarked that at the presentation of this item there was a process that Chairman Dunn had alluded to that the Commission could stop anything from being voted on that night. He said that was not done. He said Chairman Dunn had the right to bring this item back to the Board but in the process the issue found its way in the newspaper. He said there seemed to be an emphasis on larger offices. He said that was not even a consideration. He remarked he had brought this issue to the Commissioners and the way he looked at it he was fourth in line for an office. He said the way he saw it Commissioner Pfeifer was fifth in line. He said if there was a larger office and someone wanted it then he was not going to get it. He said he certainly recognized that fact. He said this project was not to get more plusher offices and he pointed out that

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was not even a consideration. He said if one of the offices was available on the front of the building, he did not want a window office. He said this was not an issue with him either. He said he was really concerned about the way this issue found itself in the newspaper and the innuendoes that two Commissioners were going to get larger offices. He asked which two Commissioners was this referring to. He said this was not the issue. He said he had fourteen people in his office last Thursday evening. He said if everyone so desired for the Commissioners to meet out in the parking lot with an apple crate to sit on that was fine with him too. He said it was wrong to put emphasis where it was not intended. He said for someone to say that two Commissioners were going to get this and it was going to be a phenomenal cost was wrong. He said this issues needed to be discussed among the Board members and not through the newspapers. He said this was not a very good way for the county to do business. He said he had heard a Commissioner say less than three weeks ago that the Board had learned to let the staff set a direction and the Board facilitate the means for the staff to do what they want to do. He said this was exactly what he was trying to do. He said staff had presented this issue. He pointed out that this had not come from him. He said he felt this was a good project and he supported it. He said if this would enhance staff's performance, he was in favor of it.

Commissioner Frady interjected that he did know who would be getting larger offices either. He said he had a nice office and he was happy with it. He said he did not want to move and he had told staff that in the first place. He said if this would make things more convenient and better for staff here then he would move his office. He said the two rooms that would be available were already bigger. He said there were not going to be anymore partitions knocked down. He said they were just going to make a conference room and that was all. He said he did not know which two offices would be the ones that the two Commissioners were going to get. He said he might be one of them because he would have to move. He said they were going to take his office for the new conference room. He said this project was not intended to make bigger offices. He said his office was plenty big enough and he did not even want to move. He asked that the business of who would be getting bigger offices be dismissed.

Chairman Dunn said he did not know how that emphasis got into the newspaper. He said he had said his remarks in a public place. He said he had been asked questions by a reporter and he had given him his answers. He said the purpose of the project was to get a bigger conference and the result would be some even bigger offices than there were now. He said the Commissioners had great offices now. He said he did not feel that anyone on the Board tried to do anything wrong but he felt it was just ill advised. He said he really believed that this was a waste. He said he had not stated that this was a phenomenal amount of money but a phenomenal waste of taxpayers' money. He said he still felt that way and he would like to see this motion overturned. He said if the Board in its majority vote decided not to, then he would not say anything else on this issue.

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Commissioner Wells asked County Administrator Chris Cofty if this needed to be done.

Chris Cofty responded that it was his recommendation all along that this project proceed.

Commissioner Wells asked Mr. Cofty to explain why.

Mr. Cofty responded that initially Carol Chandler had asked him to look at this and he had done so for the last six months or so. He said this would actually be the conversion of 180 square feet of unused hall space that was currently being heated and turning it into usable space for a larger conference room. He said 320 additional square feet would also be added in the conference room for the Commissioners. He stated the decision to do this was not based solely on just Board of Commission meetings. He said there were quite a few meetings that go on here on a daily and weekly basis. He said a lot of times the capacity in the current conference room was exceeded. He felt this was a significant bargain for the money that would be spent. He said he had never advocated that additional conference room chairs or furniture would need to be purchased. He said this was just a means to get more space to accommodate more people. He also pointed out that his intention on the renovation was to be that it would be scheduled in conjunction with the renovation of the Human Resources Department and the Information Systems Office. He said this would all be done at the same time. He said the goal was to try and complete those projects through this current budget cycle. He said they had been budgeted last year and the year before that. He remarked the problem was that so many other agencies who were using this facility i.e. driver's license, children at risk and several other agencies that staff had to find a place that was suitable to move them to. He said staff had been successful in the renovation of the Fowler house. He said G.E.D. had moved out there which created some additional space here at the complex. He said once the McElroy house was completed, several agencies would be relocated out there. He stated this project would just be in proportion with what had been planned all along.

Commissioner Wells said when Mr. Cofty had first brought this issue up to her she asked him if he felt this was what needed to be done. She said Mr. Cofty told her yes. She said she believed very strongly that the Board was supposed to determine policy and then hire competent staff to implement that policy. She said she did not want to get into the micro-management and second guessing of the County Administrator. She said the fact that this space had been renovated four times was just an example of the fact that this structure was fairly fluid. She said the county's needs change. She said the county had building staff who were supposed to be doing that and this was their job. She said they would not be placed in any situation that would be out of their line of duties, experience or expertise. She said this would more adequately utilize the current heated and air conditioned space and it would increase almost double the conference room space. She said a larger table would not be necessary and there were extra chairs that could be brought into the room. She said she did not see a problem with this project. She said she had looked at it and

understood that some people did have a problem with it if there was going to be bigger Commissioners' office out of this. She felt it was just one of those things that happens because of the configuration and was not a primary objective. She said the primary objective was to increase the conference room to better utilize the heated and air conditioned space. She said the first time she had served as a Commissioner she had served in a Commission office that was half the size of the other offices and she had done that for four years. She said she did not feel that any of the Commissioners were looking for bigger office spaces as to show that they have a bigger piece of the pie or anything of that nature. She said if this was something that happened it did not mean that next year that Commission office might not need to be used and then the offices would be shifted around again. She said she felt that was one of the flexibilities that the Commission had because the members were part time. She said no Commissioner had signed a lease on any of the offices. She said if there was a better use for the offices and for the community then the Commissioners could step aside and allow the offices to be used for that. She said she agreed with the County Administrator's expertise and recommendation on this issue. She said the Administrator had been studying this for the last six months and worked more intimately with staff and was aware of needs of this office on a day to day basis. She said she was not going to second guess the Administrator and as a result she could not change her vote.

Commissioner Frady called for the vote.

The motion failed 2-3 with Commissioner Wells, Commissioner VanLandingham and Commissioner Frady voting in opposition.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Dunn adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk

Gregory M. Dunn, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 28th day of March, 2002.

Karen Morley, Chief Deputy Clerk